



# THE ADVISOR

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Feb. 19, 2005

## ***Thousands Flock To Join Iraqi Army***



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Feb. 19, 2005

# MNSTC-I

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**Cover:** In the largest recruitment effort to date, an estimated 8,000-10,000 Iraqi men sought an opportunity to join the Iraqi Army. Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Lorie Jewell.

# Rumsfeld Discusses State of Iraq

By Jim Garamone — American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Training and equipping Iraqi security forces will speed up, and is the cornerstone of coalition policy in the country, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld said during testimony before the Senate Armed Service Committee Feb. 17.

Iraqi security forces "demonstrated considerable valor during the operations to liberate Fallujah, and in providing security for Iraq's successful recent elections," Rumsfeld said.

This is a far cry from the situation in April, when many Iraqi forces melted away in the face of an uprising by Muqtada al-Sadr's militia. Iraqi units fought alongside U.S. Marines and Soldiers in Fallujah and provided the two inner rings of security around the more than 5,000 polling places for the country's Jan. 30 election.

State Department officials said 136,342 members of Iraqi security forces are "trained and equipped." With the absorption of the Iraqi National Guard into the Iraqi army Jan. 6, 57,303 servicemembers are under the control of the Defense Ministry. Some 56,589 serve in the army, with 186 in the air force and 528 in the navy.

The Interior Ministry has 57,336 Iraqis in the police, and 21,703 members of other security groups - the border patrol and specialty units - for a total of 79,039.

The total does not count the more than 74,000 people in the Iraqi site protection force. All of this has been accomplished since June, when the Iraqi interim government was formed and coalition trainers arrived.

"Beyond the numbers, it seems to me the capability is what really is important. And capability is a function ... partly of numbers, to be sure, but it's also of training, equipment, leadership, mobility, sustainability, access to intelligence, experience," Rumsfeld said.

The Iraqi troops coming out of the training pipeline are not going to be ready to handle every threat that comes their way, the secretary said. These troops need experience, and they are getting it under the tutelage of coalition trainers.

And the Iraqis have been gaining experience. "Those who continue to unfairly denigrate Iraqi security forces I think should be reminded that they would not have lost some 1,392 killed-in-action Iraqi security forces since May of '03 if they had been hiding or hunkering down in their barracks," Rumsfeld said. "They've been out doing things."

President Bush's fiscal 2005 supplemental budget request asks for \$5.7 billion for training Iraqi security forces.



Members of the Iraqi Police Commandos prepare to roll out on a mission. The Iraqi Police Commandos are part of an Iraqi created and led force to thwart insurgents.

-Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Matt Murphy



# Iraqi Police Commandos Lead the Way

By U.S. Army Sgt. Matt Murphy — MNSTC-I Public Affairs

UNDISCLOSED LOCATION, Iraq — Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih has earmarked \$40 million for renovation of the Police Commandos bases, barracks, and facilities, U.S. officials recently announced.

"The Police Commandos is purely an Iraqi initiative," says U.S. Army Col. Jim Coffman, an adviser with the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq who works with the commandos.

"They organized themselves and they initially and immediately equipped themselves. [Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq] is purely a support mechanism for this organization; we truly only serve in an advisory role," Coffman added.

To further credit the team members of the Iraqi Police Commandos, Coffman also added, "The Iraqis are taking the lead in training with Coalition Forces in the background as support."

"This is where we want to get to," he said.

Coffman, along with U.S. Army Lt. Col. Martin Spann, the Civilian Police Assistance Training Team adviser for the Commandos, and police trainers examined a potential training site for the Iraqi Police Commandos to conduct basic training.



U.S. troops, Defense Department contractors and Iraqi Police Commando personnel walk through an obstacle course while evaluating the site for the Commandos' basic training.

-Photo By U.S. Army Sgt. Matt Murphy



U.S. Army Col. Jim Coffman, an adviser with the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq, talks to the Iraqi Police Commandos chief of training about the firing range that was constructed by the commandos.

-Photo By U.S. Army Sgt. Matt Murphy

"We are looking at a facility that will hold two battalions and provide adequate space for conducting training exercises," Spann said.

**"The Police Commandos is purely an Iraqi initiative."  
—U.S. Army Col. Jim Coffman**

Coffman explained that an appropriate facility needs to have a firing range, life support, training areas to teach basic fundamentals with weapons and tactics.

He also said the environment should be secure and safe for the commandos to operate.

On the recent site visit, Coffman praised the efforts of the Iraqi Police Commandos. He credits the Police Commandos chief of training for building an operable and functioning firing range.

"[The Iraqis] took the initiative to build a range, clear the rubble, and get it operating," Coffman said. Coffman also emphasized the fact that his Iraqi colleagues have the technical knowledge and experience to build and operate these types of projects.



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# New Tax Law Provides Additional Relief

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*Submitted by MNSTC-I Staff Judge Advocate*

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The Working Families Tax Relief Act of 2004 provides additional tax relief to U.S. servicemembers in combat zones. The important changes include (1) increasing the child credit for families by allowing them to include tax-free combat pay when calculating their refundable child credit; and (2) increasing the Earned Income Credit (EIC) for military families by giving them the option to include combat pay earned in 2004 when calculating the EIC.

## **Inclusion of combat pay in calculating child tax credit**

Individuals with gross income below certain levels may claim a child tax credit on their tax returns of \$1,000 for each qualifying child under age 17. The Act provides that, beginning in 2004, combat pay is treated as earned income which is taken into account when computing taxable income for purposes of calculating the child tax credit. This change will enable certain armed forces members with combat pay to qualify for a child tax credit refund.

## **Inclusion of combat pay in calculating EIC**

The EIC is a tax credit for low-income workers. For eligible individuals, the EIC is calculated as a certain percentage of the amount of the individual's earned income for the tax year that doesn't exceed the statutory earned income

amount. Earned income generally includes wages, salaries, tips and other employee compensation which is included in gross income. In past years, it did not include nontaxable combat pay. This rule prevented combat pay from increasing a military family's earned income to the point that the family was phased out of the credit. It also precludes otherwise eligible individuals from claiming the credit if their only "income" is tax-free combat pay.

In certain cases, it would be in the family's interest to have combat pay treated as earned income, resulting in a higher credit. In recognition of this, the Act provides that taxpayers may choose to treat combat pay as earned income for purposes of the EIC. This election is available with respect to the 2004 and 2005 tax years. Since taxpayers may choose whether to treat combat pay as earned income, estimate your taxes by both excluding and including combat pay as earned income to determine which is best for you.

## **Tax Info on Sharepoint**

For more guidance on these and other topics see IRS Publication 3, "Armed Forces Tax Guide," available at: [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

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# More Than One Million Shi'a Expected to Mark Islamic Holiday

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*Submitted by the MNSTC-I J-2 (Intelligence)*

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BAGHDAD, Iraq – Coalition forces can expect to see significantly more people gathering in public places, a rise in emotions and an increase in traffic flow to Karbala as a result of the Ashura holiday.

More than 1 million Shi'a – also known as Shiite – are expected to participate in the mourning period associated with the Feb. 19 holiday.

Ashura, the most sacred festival of Shi'a Islam, marks the death of the Imam Ali Husayn, grandson of the Prophet Mohammad. Husayn died in battle in 680 C.E. and many Shi'a commemorate the event with a pilgrimage to the Imam Husayn Mosque in Karbala.

It is also a day of great mourning, with Shi'a pilgrims often expressing grief in public by cutting themselves or beating their backs with whips or chains to reflect the pain felt by the Muslim world upon the Imam's death.

Ashura has political as well as religious symbolism, and is often used as a metaphor by Shi'a for their persecution by the Sunni. Historians point to Ashura as the event that led to the split between the Shi'a and Sunni sects.

A 40-day mourning period called Arbaeen begins with

Ashura and ends Mar. 31 with a procession on foot from An Najaf to the Husayn Shrine in Karbala. Because Ashura was banned under Saddam Hussein's regime, the resumption of public festivities has been an important symbol of restored Shi'a civil and political rights.

## **Holiday Attacks Cause Civilian Deaths**

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Insurgent attacks during the Ashura festival led to the deaths of 20 Iraqi civilians, with another 50 wounded in three separate incidents on Feb. 18, according to multinational reports and officials.

In the first attack, Iraqi security forces reported a suicide bomber attacked a large group of people leaving the Khadamiyah Mosque near Baghdad around 12:30 p.m., injuring 24 and killing 15. An hour and a half later, another suicide bomber struck marchers a few meters away from the Haji Al Bayaa Shiite Mosque in Baghdad. Two civilians and two attackers died, with 12 civilians injured, Iraqi police said.

Members of Iraq's security forces engaged in a battle with two suicide bombers just before 6 p.m. near Baghdad. The insurgents died when their explosives detonated. An hour later, three civilians died and 14 were wounded in an attack near a Mosque in Eshan, near Iskandariyah. Coalition forces believe a car bomb was used in the attack.

# NTM-I promotes educational projects, courses

By U.S. Army Maj. Cynthia Teramae — NATO Training Mission

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Members of the Iraqi Ministry of Defense attended the first English as a Second Language classes beginning in February given under the coordination of the NATO Training Mission – Iraq (NTM-I).

NTM-I is focusing on providing training and advice to the Iraqi Ministry of Defense and the Iraqi security forces middle to senior-level leaders, as well as the coordination of equipment assistance for the security forces. Additionally, members of NTM-I are assisting the Iraqis with the establishment of an Iraqi-led Training, Education and Doctrine Centre (TEDC) near Baghdad.

“They are all anticipating something good,” said Mr. Maan Hason, an Iraqi civilian who was contracted by NTM-I to conduct the beginning level English class. “Some of the students are officers at the MOD and now they are using interpreters to help them interact with their NATO counterparts. In the future they want to talk directly to their NATO friends. They feel English is a universal language and see it as useful to learn.”

Recently, more than 12 Iraqi officers graduated from a Basic Signals Officer Course provided as a joint effort by NTM-I and its sister mission, Multi-National Security Transition Command – Iraq. The signal classes are based on one-week blocks of instruction that are given over a 10-week period. This building block concept allows students to progress at different speeds depending on operational needs.

The classes are part of an overall initiative to start an Iraqi Signal School. Although classes are currently led by non-Iraqi instructors, the goal is to transition to a full Iraqi staff of instructors with the end result of a Signal School to provide the technical skills and education necessary to prepare Iraqi soldiers for combat operations.

In addition, the Iraqi Interim Government has given approval for NTM-I to create an Interim Joint Staff College in close coordination with the MOD. The interim college will be located inside Baghdad’s International Zone. In due course, this college will move to Ar Rustimayah, where it will be co-located with the Iraqi Military Academy.

This interim solution will be a start to facilitate the Iraqi MOD’s vision of training for their Iraqi Armed Forces officers with coordination and advisory assistance from NTM-I members. The college will fulfill one of the Iraqi Armed Forces’ requirements for the TEDC.



Mr. Maan Hason grades papers in the first English as a Second Language Class held at the NATO Training Mission – Iraq Headquarters located in the International Zone, Baghdad. The NTM-I is focusing on providing training and advice to the Iraqi Ministry of Defense and the Iraqi security forces middle to senior-level leaders as well as the coordination of equipment assistance for ISF. Additionally, NTM-I is assisting the Iraqi Ministry of Defense in the establishment of an Iraqi-led Training, Education and Doctrine Centre (TEDC) near Baghdad.

-Photo by U.S. Army Maj. Cynthia Teramae

The Joint Staff College will provide for two distinct but complementary staff officer courses - one for junior-level officers in the rank of captain to major, and one for mid to senior-level officers in the rank of major to lieutenant colonel.

The plan calls for renovating a building, which will provide new classrooms, a dining facility, a computer lab, library, central lecture facility, and an administration building. The students and faculty will be housed within the International Zone. The first phase of renovations are projected for completion in April and classes may begin soon after with instructor training for the college faculty.

In the mean time, English classes continue at the NTM-I headquarters. The classes run for a six-month period and will help improve English proficiency to allow more members of the MOD and ISF to participate in NATO-led out-of-country training. This year, more than 300 out-of-country student billets will be offered to Iraqis who qualify to train at NATO schools. This training is an integral part of the train, advise and equip mission.

“For many years, my country was suppressed under Saddam Hussein,” said Hason. “But for me, I am very proud to be able to work with NATO toward helping to rebuild my country. It’s a great honor to be part of this.”



# Recruitment Drive for Iraqi Army Draws Thousands

By U.S. Army Sgt. Lorie Jewell — MNSTC-I Public Affairs

**SOUTHERN IRAQ** – An estimated 8,000 to 10,000 men arrived by foot, bus, and other vehicles before dawn Feb. 14, at an airfield outside an Iraqi army base in an effort to join their country's army, officials said.

Of that, close to 5,000 made it through a screening process that led them onto the base, home to several thousand Iraqi soldiers and a contingent of U.S. and coalition service members. Most will be transferred to other bases in Iraq to supplement existing units, officials said.

The process was a result of the largest recruitment effort for the Iraqi Army to date, said U.S. Navy Lt. Cmdr. Anthony Woodley of the Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq.

During the screening process, potential recruits were given a literacy test, physical condition check, and questioned about prior military service. Once inside the base, they went through a medical screening and received uniforms, boots and other military-related clothing.



An Iraqi soldier gives a recruit a literacy test as thousands of other recruits wait in formation. The test was part of the screening process for a Feb. 14, 2005 recruitment drive for the Iraqi army. -Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Lorie Jewell



As the crowd swelled, one of several dozen security personnel attempts to maintain order at the initial entry point for the Iraqi Army recruiting drive.

-Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Lorie Jewell

Many recruits showed up with proof that they were serving when Saddam Hussein's regime fell and they were subsequently released from duty. Former Iraqi army Maj. Hussien Ali Kadhun, 48, traveled about an hour and a half by bus to rejoin.

"I want to serve my country and fight the terrorists," he said, through a translator. Ali Kadhun said he graduated from a military college in 1979 with a bachelor's degree in military science. He returned to school to study law shortly after his release from the army in 2003.

Another former soldier, Hakeem Shaial Hassan, 27, worked as a farmer after his first stint in the Army. It took him nearly four hours to get to the airfield with a group of friends, looking for a job to provide him and his family with a better income. New recruits earn \$420,380 dinars a month, or about \$212 in U.S. dollars, officials said.

"I am proud that I made it," Shaial Hassan said, through an interpreter. "But I am sad that my friends did not. They will have to go back home and tell their families they did not make it."

U.S. military officials were expecting a little more than 6,000 potential recruits. Service members from the U.S. Army, Air Force, Marine Corps and Navy were joined by coalition troops, several civilian security personnel and a few hundred Iraqi soldiers stationed at the base. Several dozen Iraqi soldiers arrived at the base the day before and went right to work early the next morning, said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Mark Harvey, base commander.

"We encountered all friendlies, no bombs and no deaths," Harvey said. "So I'm happy."





## On Bare Feet, or by Bus . . .



Thousands of Iraqi men, young and old, headed to an airfield in southeast Iraq before sunrise Feb. 14 (top photo) for a chance to join their country's army. By 7 a.m., several thousand gathered at the initial entry point to the airfield (bottom photo), where they went through a screening process that started with a thorough search. Some walked, but most arrived by bus or car (above photo). Bare feet were a common sight (upper left photo) until recruits who made it through the screening were issued uniforms on base. One new recruit (left photo) wasted no time in putting on his uniform and boots as a line of other recruits waited to receive theirs. Part of the screening process included a literacy test, where potential recruits jammed themselves into the station (below right photo). After making it through the literacy check point, one man paused on the side of the runway to pray (below left photo).

-Photos by U.S. Army Sgt. Lorie Jewell



# Iraqi Navy Ships to be Built in Baghdad by Iraqis

## MNSTC-I Public Affairs

BAGHDAD, Iraq — The contract is signed for six new Iraqi Navy ships to be built in Iraq, by Iraqis, and in support of the local Baghdad economy. The first of the ships, called Al Uboor class patrol boats, will enter service in six months with the last of them hitting the water 18 months from now, according to Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq officials.

Construction began before Operation Iraqi Freedom but the new contract will see the ships completed to a revised design. Funded by the Interim Iraqi Government's 2005 defense budget, they will cost a total of approximately \$15 million. The ships will patrol Iraqi territorial waters.

Completing the contracts and continuing the construction of the ships is the first example of joint planning by the Iraqi Ministry of Defense Policy and Requirements office and



Iraq will build six Al Uboor class patrol boats, with the first of the boats to enter service in six months.

-Coalition Military Assistance Training Team photo

**“This is an important day for the Iraqi Navy and the Iraqi people. It is a key step towards Iraq taking responsibility for the defense of its territorial waters and will provide employment for many Iraqi workers.”**

**—Iraqi Navy Commodore Muhammad Jawad**

military staffs.

Commodore Muhammad Jawad, the head of the Iraqi Navy, said “This is an important day for the Iraqi Navy and the Iraqi people. It is a key step towards Iraq taking responsibility for the defense of its territorial waters and will provide employment for many Iraqi workers.”

It will also enable the Coalition maritime presence in the Northern Arabian Gulf to be reduced making a number of naval units available for other taskings, Iraqi officials said.

### PVT. MURPHY'S LAW

By  
SFC Mark Baker



## The Advisor

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# Iraqi Security Forces News Briefs

## Battalion Finds Large Munitions Cache

FALLUJAH, Iraq – The Iraqi Police's 1st Public Order Brigade found a large munitions cache in Fallujah Feb. 15.

The munitions find consisted of 64- PG9 anti-tank rockets, 36-57mm rounds, 25-152mm rounds, 36-OG7 grenades, 15-122mm rounds, two rocket-propelled grenades, 28-82mm rounds, 18-60mm rounds, 35-electric blasting caps, 150 lbs of plastic explosive, 6,000- 23mm rounds, 3,000-14.5 rounds, 4,500-20mm rounds, an undetermined amount of detonation cord, and a machine gun.

A U.S. Marine Corps Explosives Ordinance Disposal team will destroy the munitions.

Individuals who provide information or lead Iraqi security forces or Coalition forces to munitions caches or other terrorist activity are eligible to receive monetary rewards for their assistance. A reward program providing as much as \$1,500 in U.S. currency is available depending on the validity of information and amount of weapons or munitions found.

## Iraqi Police Thwart Kidnapping, Attack

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Iraqi police forces stopped a kidnapping and fought back an attack by anti-Iraqi forces in two separate incidents this week, according to officials with the Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq's Civilian Police Assistance Training Team.

Officers from the Jisr Dialah Police Station in Baghdad stopped a suspicious vehicle outside the station Feb. 15. Hearing a voice from the trunk, they discovered a man tied up and gagged inside who later told authorities he was hijacked. The suspect tried to run, but officers caught him after a short chase on foot. They arrested the suspect on charges of motor vehicle theft and kidnapping. The victim, who was not identified, was treated at the police station and released.

On Feb. 16, a group of Iraqi police led by Col. Ali encountered small arms fire from several anti-Iraqi forces in Baqubah who were also firing rocket-propelled grenades. Col. Ali called for assistance from U.S. forces to help clear the enemy shooters from a rooftop, and establish a security perimeter around the area while the Iraqi police officers cleared a house where the weapons were fired.

Inside, the officers discovered several weapons and a stash of ammunition, including two rocket-propelled grenade launchers, 12 rocket-propelled grenade rounds, two grenades, a mortar tube and about 40 mortar rounds. They didn't find enemy forces inside the house, or inside the four other houses they searched.

The Iraqi police officers reported killing one insurgent, capturing another and wounding one during the initial fight.

## Iraqi Police Service Graduates 183

BAGHDAD, Iraq – The Iraqi Police Service graduated 183 personnel from police training specialty courses at the Adnan Training Facility, Feb. 17, as part of the Iraqi government's ongoing effort to train up its security forces.

The courses consist of Basic Criminal Investigation with 49 graduates, First-Line Supervision with 16 graduates, Kidnapping Investigation with 27 graduates, Incident Command with 48 graduates, and Internal Controls with 43 graduates.

The Basic Criminal Investigation course covers topics such as theft, burglary, arson, robbery, sexual offenses, interview and interrogation techniques and homicide. Participants receive instruction and hands-on training in fingerprinting, photography, tool marks and plaster casting.

First-Line Supervision is a two-week course focusing on two major areas, the first focusing on a combination of human rights training, ethics, and policing in a democracy; the second, interpersonal skills.

The Kidnapping Investigation course teaches hostage negotiation skills and introduces police officers to the skills involved in negotiating the successful resolution of hostage and barricade situations.

Incident Command teaches first response techniques to a crime or accident scene, how to coordinate agencies responding to the scene and managing assets at the scene.

Internal Controls is a specialty course providing training on how to deal with personnel complaints and allegations, as well as police conduct in general. Training includes processing of complaints, as well as follow-up investigations to determine the facts of all allegations made against members of the Iraqi police service in the performance of their official duties.

Officers participated in these courses in addition to the standard eight-week police training officers undergo prior to service – or in the case of prior-service officer recruits – the three-week “transition integration program” training course.

The police officers report back for continued duty at their respective stations immediately.

## Iraqi Infantry Unit Repels Ambush

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Iraqi soldiers fended off an attack in northwest Iraq Feb. 17 by insurgents who opened fire from two vehicles, according to a report from the Multi-National Security Transition Command – Iraq's, Coalition Military Assistance Training Team.

The soldiers from the Iraqi Army's 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade of the Iraqi Intervention Force were on a foot patrol when they were ambushed. They returned fire, killing three insurgents and wounding one.

The IIF is a highly trained counterinsurgency unit trained specifically for military operations in an urban terrain.



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# Iraq Certifies Election Results-Country One Step Closer

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*By Donna Miles — American Forces Press Service*

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WASHINGTON— It's official: the Shiite-dominated United Iraqi Alliance carried Iraq's Jan. 30 elections and will claim the most seats in Iraq's new national assembly.

The Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq certified the election results today and announced the results during a news conference in Baghdad.

According to press reports, the United Iraqi Alliance received 48 percent of the vote. A predominantly Kurdish alliance took 25 percent of the votes, and the group led by interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi received just under 14 percent of the vote.

Official Iraqi confirmation of the results was unavailable at press time, and U.S. officials would not confirm the reported results, saying the Iraqis should be the ones to release the details.

Election officials avoided saying exactly how the vote will translate into seats in the national assembly, until a three-day window to register complaints expires.

Once formed, the national assembly will draft the new Iraqi constitution and elect a president and two vice presidents. They, in turn, will name a prime minister, and a variety of names are being circulated about the most likely choice.

During a news conference this week nominating Ambassador to Iraq John Negroponte as the U.S. director of national intelligence, President Bush called the political positioning

now taking place in Iraq a "healthy" example of a new democracy in progress

"It's inspiring to see a fledgling democracy begin to take ... wing right here in the 21st century in a part of the world where people didn't think there could be progress," he said. "I think there can be progress, and we'll continue to work that progress."

When the provisional results of the election were announced Feb. 13, Bush congratulated "every candidate who stood for election and those who will take office once the results are certified."

The president expressed additional praise for the 8 million Iraqis who voted "for defying terrorist threats and setting their country on the path of democracy and freedom." He said the United States and its coalition partners "can all take pride in our role in making that great day possible."

During a Feb. 16 briefing to the United Nations Security Council, the under- secretary general for political affairs said nobody could fail to have been moved by the courage, determination and confidence Iraqis demonstrated as they went to the polls Jan. 30.

Kieran Predergast called the elections a significant development in Iraq's transition to democratic government and expressed hope that the new transitional government will be inclusive and reflect Iraqi society.

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## Iraqi Security Forces News Briefs Continued

### **Iraqi Police Graduate from Jordan International Police Training Center**

BAGHDAD, Iraq – On Feb. 17, 1,491 police officers graduated after completing the thirteenth basic police training course conducted at the Jordan International Police Training Center.

The basic police training program is designed to provide fundamental and democratic policing skills based on international human rights standards to the students in preparation for assuming police officer responsibilities. The program consists of four weeks of general policing and four weeks of tactical police training.

To date, 11,158 police officers have previously completed the course which is taught by police trainers from Iraq, Jordan, Canada, Sweden, Slovenia, Austria, Finland, Czech Republic, Singapore, Poland, Slovakia, Australia, Hungary, Belgium, United Kingdom and United States.

The new officers will return to Iraq where they will be assigned to police stations throughout the country.

### **Iraqi Forces Uncover Huge Weapons Cache**

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Officers with the 8th Mechanized Police Brigade recently discovered a huge cache of weapons hidden under a house located outside the International Zone, but near a multinational check point, according to officials with the Multi-National Security Transition Command – Iraq's, Civilian Police Assistance Training Team.

Among the weapons found were 50 small and medium range machine guns and a variety of bases, 18 mortar rounds ranging in size from 60 to 120 mm, eight mortar tube bases, a rocket-propelled grenade launcher and four rockets of various sizes, nine 106 mm rounds, and a case of gas masks.

The 8th Mechanized Police Brigade is a paramilitary, counterinsurgency Iraqi police unit that deploys to high risk areas using light armored personnel carriers.



# Iraqi and U.S. Soldiers Build New Iraqi Army

By Al Pessin — Voice of America

All across Iraq, Iraqi and U.S. officers are working together to train the country's new army. That effort is being expanded to involve thousands more American trainers, and tens-of-thousands of Iraqi soldiers, with the goal of giving full responsibility for Iraq's security to the new army as soon as possible.

The tanks lined up on a huge expanse of concrete are painted the color of sand. Iraqi soldiers stand in front of each tank, with their U.S. trainers nearby, all in their desert camouflage combat uniforms.

Their Iraqi commanding officer, sporting a beret and a graying mustache, beams with pride.

"This project, I think, is the most successful that we have in the Iraqi army right now, because we combine together the American offer of their help and our, let's say, experience that we had before," he said.

The officer, Staff Brigadier Bashar Mahmoud Ayoub, served 27 years in the Iraqi army, before retiring in 1994. He came back last year.

"I have the experience and the power," said Brigadier Ayoub. "I want to create once again a new army. I want to give them all my knowledge. I want to give them all my experience. After that, we can retire."

Staff Brigadier Ayoub was given command of the new Iraqi army's only tank unit in mid-January. Just two weeks later, the unit rolled dramatically into Baghdad to help secure the national election. In a country where foreign tanks and other military vehicles are everywhere, it was the first time the Iraqi armor had been on the streets since the fall of Saddam Hussein, nearly two years ago.

"We went inside Baghdad for three days," he added. "And the people were so proud and happy to see the Iraqi army once again, especially the tanks and the armored vehicles."

Brigadier Ayoub's job, and those of other Iraqi and foreign officers training Iraq's new army, is not an easy one. The soldiers are a mix of those who served in the old army and new volunteers. The new arrivals know nothing of military skills or discipline. And the experienced soldiers are accustomed to a very different military one woefully short of supplies, even bullets, and which required blind adherence to orders from the top.

The trainers are using a variety of donated equipment and new concepts to change all that. The soldiers are being taught discipline, but also to take responsibility for their missions, without waiting for orders or approval from Baghdad.

"They are helping us to go back to the right way to organize

the new system, to organize the new army, the one we have in our mind," said Brigadier Ayoub. "They are helping us, they are not controlling anything, but they are helping us, to push us, to get the new organization."

Officials say there are about 60,000 soldiers in Iraq's new army. Most of them have minimal training and experience. But some units are receiving advanced training, and nearly all of them are getting experience fast in Iraq's battle against insurgents. And officials say more men are volunteering every day, including a surge of volunteers after the Iraqi army's widely praised performance on Election Day.

That performance surprised many, but not U.S. officers who have been working with the new Iraqi army, like Col. Fred Kienle. He says Iraqi units are beginning to take on missions that coalition troops used to do, and he expects more of that in the coming months.

"I think we're going to see it across the board. We see the mechanized units begin to move in. We see the combat service support elements," said Kienle. "As a matter of fact, our transportation regiment this week moved 42 pallets of supplies, a mission that would normally go to the coalition forces, this unit is picking it up."

U.S. officers say that, in elite units, the Iraqi officers and soldiers are conducting their own missions, from planning to training to execution.

Iraqi officers interviewed at Taji say they have no problem working under American officers, at least temporarily. Indeed, the Iraqi colonel who will take command of this base in a few months, Abbas Fadl, praised his U.S. trainer during his briefing for Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

Col. Abbas was one of the first former Iraqi officers to volunteer to help build the new army. He told Rumsfeld that after he gave some interviews encouraging other Iraqis to join the army, insurgents attacked his family, killing his 7-month-old daughter.

In spite of such tragedies, Kienle says, he thinks he knows why the Iraqi and U.S. soldiers get along so well.

"I think it's all about soldiers. It really is," he said. "They're all soldiers. What we find is, particularly the Iraqi soldiers are patriots. They are risking their lives to be soldiers, as most soldiers do, but them particularly. They put up with the intimidation that their families might undergo. And they see a new Iraq. They're committed to what they're doing."

Kienle says it is no coincidence that the headquarters of the coalition training command in Iraq is called Camp Phoenix. He says the Iraqi army is like a phoenix, the mythological bird that rises from ashes to a new life.



# U.S. Senators Meet with MNSTC-I Commanding General

By U.S. Army Sgt. Matt Murphy — MNSTC-I Public Affairs



The five senator delegation led by John McCain of Arizona receives a briefing from MNSTC-I Commanding General, U.S. Army Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus and Deputy Commanding General British Brigadier David Clements. (From left to right at table) Feingold, Rodham Clinton, McCain, Collins, and Graham. (Facing) Lt. Gen. Petraeus and Brigadier Clements.  
—Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Matt Murphy

BAGHDAD, Iraq – A congressional delegation of five senators, four of which are members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services, visited Phoenix Base in the International Zone Feb. 19 where they met with U.S. Army Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus, commanding general of the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq.

Led by Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., the delegation also included Senators Susan Collins, R-Maine, Russ Feingold, D-Wis., Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., and Lindsey Graham, R-S.C.

Lt. Gen. Petraeus briefed the delegation on the progress Iraqi security forces have made in their training programs, and he discussed the successes of Iraqi forces during the recent Iraqi election.

“There were over 130,000 Iraqi Army or Police involved in the security of the elections,” Petraeus said. “Coalition Forces served purely in a secondary and back up position,” he added.

Petraeus also noted the overwhelming response of thousands of Iraqis showing up to join the army or become po-

lice officers post-election. “A recent Iraqi Army recruiting event drew a crowd of 8,000 to 10,000 Iraqis wanting to serve their country. Security force volunteers are showing up in masses every time the word gets out these groups might be hiring,” Petraeus said.

McCain, citing reports from 2003 and early 2004 about Iraqi desertions, asked Petraeus about his degree of confidence as to whether or not the Iraqi Security Forces would desert if situations became uncomfortable again.

“I am reasonably confident in the Iraqi Security Forces and their ability to stand fast,” Petraeus said. “The security forces know they will be backed up. They have communications, equipment and training. In many instances, they are in complete lead of their areas or province with Coalition Forces serving only as advisers.”

MNSTC-I Deputy Commanding General, British Brigadier David Clements said, “The common thread in the Iraqi Security Forces is leadership. The units with good leadership are thriving and doing well. We are moving on to our next phase of training to improve leadership,” he added.